

Serial No. 10/624,057

Art Unit: 2822

REMARKS

Claims 1-4 and 6-11 are pending in the application. Claim 5 is canceled. Claims 1 and 6 are amended.

The present invention claims priority benefits under 35 U.S.C. 119 of European Application No. 02255584.1, filed August 9, 2002. Concurrently with filing the present application, Applicants submitted a certified copy of the above European application. Applicants respectfully request that Examiner acknowledge receipt of the certified copy of European Application No. 02255584.1 in the next Office Action.

Applicants note with appreciation that the Examiner has indicated that claims 5-11 would be allowable if rewritten in independent form. Rather than rewriting claims 5-11, Applicants opted to move the allowable description of claim 5 into claim 1.

Claims 1-4 are rejected as being anticipated by Japanese Kokai 7-294777. Applicants amended claim 1 to include a recital that was previously presented in claim 5, thus placing claim 1 in condition for allowance.

Claims 2-4 depend from claim 1. By virtue of this dependence, claims 2-4 are now also in condition for allowance.

Applicants respectfully request reconsideration and withdrawal of the section 102(b) rejection of claims 1-4.

Whereas claims 6-11 depend from claim 1, claims 6-11 are also in condition for allowance.

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Applicants amended claim 1 to include a recital that was previously presented in claim 5, and canceled claim 5. Applicants amended claim 6 to depend from claim 1. None of the amendments is intended to narrow the scope of any term of any claim, and therefore the doctrine of equivalents should be available for all terms of all claims.

An indication of the allowability of all pending claims by issuance of a Notice of Allowability is earnestly solicited.

Respectfully submitted,

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